

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-41 (canceled)

42. (currently amended) A composition comprising an isolated peptide prepared by expressing an expression vector wherein said expression vector comprises a nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of the sequence shown from base number 5147 through 7129 in SEQ ID NO:6 and the sequence shown from base number 5117 through 7096 in SEQ ID NO:10, said peptide being specifically immunoreactive with hepatitis E virus (HEV) antibodies.

43. (previously presented) The composition of claim 42, wherein said composition further comprises an adjuvant.

44. (previously presented) The composition of claim 42, wherein said peptide comprises a preparation for use as an immunoreactive.

45. (currently amended) A composition comprising an isolated peptide prepared by expressing an expression vector wherein said expression vector comprises a nucleic acid homologous to nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of the sequence shown from base number 5147 through 7129 in SEQ ID NO:6 and the sequence shown from base number 5117 through 7096 in SEQ ID NO:10; wherein a nucleic acid is homologous to another nucleic acid if either the two nucleic acids are capable of hybridizing using 2 x SSC, 0.1% SDS, at room temperature twice, 30 minutes each; then 2 x SSC, 0.1% SDS, 50°C once, 30 minutes; then 2 x SSC, room temperature twice, 10 minutes each; or where said

nucleic acids contain at most about 30% basepair mismatches, said peptide being specifically immunoreactive with hepatitis E virus (HEV) antibodies.

46. (previously presented) The composition of claim 45, wherein said composition further comprises an adjuvant.

47. (currently amended) The composition of claim 45, wherein said peptide comprises a preparation for use as a vaccine in immunizing an individual against hepatitis E virus (HEV).

48. (previously presented) The composition of claim 45, wherein said expression vector encodes the protein of SEQ ID NO:8.

49. (previously presented) The composition of claim 45, wherein said expression vector comprises a nucleic acid with at most about 30% base pair mismatches when compared to a nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of the sequence shown from base number 5147 through 7129 in SEQ ID NO:6 and the sequence shown from base number 5117 through 7096 in SEQ ID NO:10.

50. (previously presented) The composition of claim 49, wherein said peptide further comprises an adjuvant.

51. (currently amended) The composition of claim 49, wherein said peptide comprises a preparation for use as a vaccine in immunizing an individual against hepatitis E virus (HEV).

52. (previously presented) The composition of claim 45, wherein said expression vector comprises a nucleic acid with 15-25% base pair mismatches when compared to a nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of the sequence

shown from base number 5147 through 7129 in SEQ ID NO:6 and the sequence shown from base number 5117 through 7096 in SEQ ID NO:10.

53. (previously presented) The composition of claim 45, wherein said expression vector comprises a nucleic acid with 5-15% base pair mismatches when compared to a nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of the sequence shown from base number 5147 through 7129 in SEQ ID NO:6 and the sequence shown from base number 5117 through 7096 in SEQ ID NO:10.

54. (previously presented) A composition comprising an isolated peptide prepared by expressing an expression vector wherein said expression vector comprises a fragment of at least 30 nucleotides of a nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of the sequence shown from base number 5147 through 7129 in SEQ ID NO:6 and the sequence shown from base number 5117 through 7096 in SEQ ID NO:10.

55. (previously presented) The composition of claim 54, wherein said nucleic acid comprises a fragment of at least 50 nucleotides of a nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of the sequence shown from base number 5147 through 7129 in SEQ ID NO:6 and the sequence shown from base number 5117 through 7096 in SEQ ID NO:10.

56. (previously presented) The composition of claim 55, wherein said composition further comprises an adjuvant.

57. (currently amended) The composition of claim 55, wherein said peptide comprises a preparation for use as a vaccine in immunizing an individual against hepatitis E virus (HEV).

58. (previously presented) The composition of claim 54, wherein said nucleic acid comprises a fragment encoding about 30 amino acids of SEQ ID NO:8.

59. (previously presented) The composition of claim 54, wherein said nucleic acid comprises a fragment of about 100 base pairs of a nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of the sequence shown from base number 5147 through 7129 in SEQ ID NO:6 and the sequence shown from base number 5117 through 7096 in SEQ ID NO:10.

60. (previously presented) The composition of claim 59, wherein said peptide further comprises an adjuvant.

61. (currently amended) The composition of claim 59, wherein said peptide comprises a preparation for use as a vaccine in immunizing an individual against hepatitis E virus (HEV).